

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 6 has been amended to removed the numeral included.

Claims 1 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the reference to relatively fine threads while claim 8 has been amended to use the term flexible which is definite.

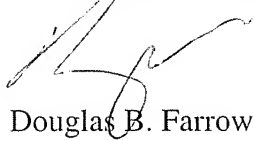
Claim 1 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ritchie. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the needle and seat are both tapered. Because of the taper and the long sealing surfaces, flow can be adjusted very finely. On the other hand, Ritchie's device uses a non-tapered cylindrical needle and seat and adjustment is accomplished by selectively occluding air passage 316. Given the narrow size of this passage, fine adjustment of flow is difficult at best. Accordingly, the claim as amended patentably distinguishes over the rejection and references of record.

Claims 2-9 have been amended to depend from claim 1. In addition to being patentable for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1, those claims are also patentable for the limitations contained therein.

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Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments